Gwin Coch

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Gwin Coch

by Angelic_Disaster

Summary

Eternity is too long. At some point, you'll get bored. Luckily for Hannibal and Will, they have each other for company.

Or: An angel and a demon deal with each other's bullshit through the history of humanity.

Written for the #HannibalAUgust of 2021.
Day 11: Angel & Demons.

Notes

Important content warnings (!): People die: Sickness (The Black Plague); The Spanish Inquisition; Slight mention to sex in one (1) scene. They/Them pronouns for Hannibal and Will in the two first scenes. Hannibal is named Baal/Belzebub for one (1) scene. After that is Will and Hannibal, he/him and he/him.

Inspired by Good Omens' Episode 3 Cold Open.

ALSO, important author's note: There is a NSFW (smut) version of the Babylon scene, if you're interest in reading angel/demon porn look at the end notes!

Something akin to cannibalism I guess? Hannibal says it doesn't count as cannibalism.

See the end of the work for more notes

[In the Beginning]

Rise and shine, my child

Two pairs of wings, two facing upwards and two facing down; four faces, one of them human, if humans were to exist yet; thousands of eyes in every color meant to be named, covering skin and the air between the fire and the light, a halo of pale blue over dark hair; the prettiest and purest of faces yet to exist. And above it all, a strong, fierce will; *protect.*

Cherub who will guard the Earth, the Garden of Eden and Humanity, take this flaming sword, and do what you must.

“Yes, Mother.”

[In the Beginning. Part II]

“Revolution is close, Mother,” The Morning Star said; behind them, the most beautiful of angels with burning eyes and golden hair, stood five other ones. One of them, an Archangel with eyes as sharp as the rest of them, watched curiously; They were no less beautiful, but their hair shone between wheat under the sunlight and ashes of a burning temple.

Then, so be it.

And just like that, The Morning Star burned until their ashes were cast under the earth.

Who’s next?

Hordes of angels rose to fight. With a snap that echoed across the existence of sound, and just like that, before one single drop of light could be spilled between siblings, they were gone.

Almighty God turned her ceaseless light to the Archangel that had stood behind Lucifer's back, and that had watched the interaction of their Mother and their siblings in silent curiosity.

"If you won't mind, Mother, I would like to take the stairs," they said.

By all means, my child. Watch your step and don't forget to hold to the railing as you go.

[Garden of Eden; 4004 b.C]

"This is your fault," the angel standing over the wall of Eden said to the demon standing at their side. Behind them was the green, fertile garden. Everything else was just sand, unforgiven dessert to where Eve and Adam were cast.

"Is it?" The demon asked, looking at the angel to his side. "Could it be yours, too. Where were you when they ate?"

The angel just muffled under his breath, the wolf at their feet rolled on the floor, pawing at the air, content with the angel rubbing her belly.

"I only asked why they couldn't eat from the tree. Nothing more, nothing less. If Mother's wishes were to not let them eat the fruit, why would She put it there?" A pause, the wolf barked happily and the demon added, "I think She was curious. Aren't you?"

The angel finally looked at the human-like figure at their side, extending a forbidden fruit in the color of gold. The demon had hair the color of ashes and wheat, eyes the color of human blood and two elegant antlers that shared the same tarnished shade of flesh caressed by

Hellfire. And in his skin and the air around and everywhere where their light shone, where the angel had thousands eyes, the demon had thousands of hungry mouths.

“Baal,” the demon introduced himself when the angel didn’t accept the fruit. “And you are?”

“Why would I share my name with the Sin of Gluttony?” The rudeness of the angel didn’t make the demon’s smile waver. Better so, the mouths around him salivated.

“Because Hell has become boring, and I have the feeling we will be running into each other more often than not. Do you think Mother would forbid we become friendly?”

The angel rose to their feet and the wolf whined.

“I have not chosen a name yet. I am only Mother’s will,” the angel took the golden fruit from the demon’s claws, but they didn’t bite.

The demon’s eyes shone bright like the Morning Star had burnt themselves during the Great Fall. He breathed a long sigh, and spoke in a smooth voice, *“Will,”* he said. “What a powerful name for you to have.”

From the sky roared a thunder. The grey clouds hid the sun, but God didn't stop them.

“Won’t you take a bite, Will?” the demon asked, and the angel muffled a bitter laugh.

“I don’t share your appetite, demon,” they said, throwing the fruit in the air and giving it back.

“We’ll see.”

Bright blue eyes met red, a tempest that the Earth would never be able to contain. The angel said nothing to it, and the demon was gone when the first rain began, leaving a golden fruit in the place he had stood.

[Mesopotamia; 3004 b.C]

If humans were to look, they would see a deer with red eyes, because a demon shouldn’t be inside the ark. But he was bored, and there was no way where he could be that wasn’t Hell. Just water and water and water.

The deer that wasn’t a deer but was a demon, raised his head to the grey sky. This looked more like something his lot would do; not his Mother.

Humans, such curious little creatures. He couldn't blame Her for doing something like this. Sometimes he got bored too, and messed with the humans for his own amusement. It seemed that he had inherited that from his Mother. Of course, not on such a large scale.

“How did you get here, Baal?” Asked a voice as melodious as a harp, but as dangerous as a sword.

Baal smiled, humans could not see demons dressed as deers; but angels could.

“Such an old name,” one of his mouths said. “Good to see you again, Will,” the mouth that was in the center of his throat whispered, and it echoed softly by one of the mouths that were in his left arm. Then, the one in the palm of his right hand spoke, “please, call me Hannibal.”

The angel said nothing, just held his sword set aflame tight. Baal, now Hannibal, said, “if God can erase the world and make it anew, shouldn't I be able to change my name?”

Four faces and thousands of eyes regarded him from afar, scrutinizing, considering. Then, after a pause, the angel spoke.

“Are you still the Sin of Gluttony, Hannibal?” Pleased, Hannibal nodded. Just then, the angel made his sword disappear, and without the consuming fire darkening the corners of his vision, Hannibal realized that behind the angel’s legs were human children. Dirty, shaking and afraid, too many to be Noah's family.

Hannibal looked at the children, varying from all ages and shapes, then at the angel protecting them with his wings and four faces torn between fear and desperation.

“I can’t make miracles, or Heaven will know I got them on the boat,” the angel sighed, looking exactly like someone who was having a fight with his own self inside would look like. “Would you… Could you…” He sighed again, defeated. “They’re hungry, and I don’t know what to do. Please.”

Hannibal tilted his head, curious as he took his human form. The children recoiled in fear, holding tight to the angel's robes.

"I wouldn't take you for a rule breaker, Will," Hannibal said. His expression was controlled except for the softest of gleams in his eyes. But the mouths were delighted, smiling sharply under his clothes.

The angel was going to say something, irritated as he was by the demon's taunt, but Hannibal raised both of his palms up and with them, the room filled to the brim with foods and drinks. Foods from all kingdoms of the world that were now dead and the children of the ark would have never known; foods and drinks that would have been served at the tables of kings.

Wide eyes shifted from the foods to the demon and then to the angel, and then back to the food.

"Go ahead," the angel whispered gently, and the children ran towards the plate closer to them. Then, the angel turned his eyes towards Hannibal, a cold stare that held no bite in it and turned soft and grateful in a second. "Thank you."

"Dangerous thing, to owe to a demon."

He said, being met by the cold, calculated but determined stare of the cherub.

"I know."

Hannibal's smile, the one in his face, twisted with thousands rows of teeth.

"I'll hold you to it."

[Babylon; 1408 b.C]

“Of course it was you,” the angel said, cracking a tired laugh.

“Welcome to my humble home, Will.” The mouth that crossed vertically on Hannibal’s throat greeted him as the demon stood up from a throne made of gold and shining jewels. He dressed in robes made of colorful threads that showed his skin caressed for the sun and his thousands of mouths.

The torches’ fire casted dancing shadows over the stone floors where worshipers laid, gloating themselves with obscene foods and drinks or sex with each other. Two worshipers sat forgotten on the armrests of Hannibal’s throne, where previously they were feeding him pieces of bleeding meat.

Hannibal gestured to the guards at the angel’s side, and they submissively lowered their weapons.

“What brings you to me, cunning cherub?” the demon spoke with that blasphemous voice that characterized him, thick like the smoke of hallucinogenic herbs filling the temple.

“An assignment,” he answered, following Hannibal towards a hallway from where smooth curtains hung and danced around them, caressing their skins like water. “I was sent to investigate a pagan god that was growing a strong number of followers. I don’t know why it didn't occur to me it could have been you.”

Another room opened for them with cushions scattered across the floor, a woman dressed in purple robes offered the angel a jar of wine, and he declined as gracefully as he could.

“Are you surprised?” The mouth on Hannibal’s back asked, as the demon took a plate of fruits, and gestured to the few servants there to leave.

“I feel like I shouldn’t; Hannibal, god of abundance,” the angel said in faux mocking, then laughed. “I can’t believe I didn’t see it coming.” The demon shrugged, proceeding to sit over the cushions, laying there with the robes cascading across his form as the angel stood in a corner. “But it is a pleasant surprise, nonetheless.”

“Pleasant?” The mouths of Hannibal’s body chuckled while the one in his chest spoke joyfully. The mouth on Hannibal’s face just smiled with sharp fangs as the demon gestured him to come closer, offering his hand.

“It makes my job easier,” the angel said, walking careful, slow steps until he stood over the demon. “Heaven sent me to dismantle your cult,” he warned, but there was no bite, no offence in it. The grin in Hannibal's mouths widened.

“But you won’t.”

“Only one cherub against one of the princes of Hell? Hell, no.” The angel laughed, accepting the hand and sitting with the demon. “But I’ll warn you, I’ll send a message notifying them that you’re here. It would do good for you to lay low for a while."

"How boring," the demon moaned dramatically, leaning his head over the angel's shoulder.

"I think you mean how kind of *me,"* the angel laughed, shrugging the demon off his shoulder.

"I wouldn't do you the disrespect of expecting less from a cherub," Hannibal said, leaning to recover the plate of fruits that rested close to them. "But forget Heaven for today, speak to them tomorrow. You must be tired."

"I can't get tired," the angel said, rejecting the offered fruits, just to receive a mocking pout, "*we* can't get tired," he said, eyeing the fruits then the demon, "neither *we* can get hungry."

"This is the fifth time since I met you that you reject my food," Hannibal's pout grew more pronounced, making the angel's laugh echo like bells in the room. "I'll start to think that you have something against me."

"Well," he shrugged, "you're a demon."

"Does that make me inherently untrustworthy? Evil, perhaps? Tell me, Will, is a thing evil when it simply obeys its own nature? When it embodies its nature? When that nature is created by those which revile it?"

"Humans create and revile; we are not humans. We obey."

"*You* obey," one of the mouths said as Hannibal drank from a jar of wine, one of the others added, "I delight."

The angel curled an amused brow, "I can see that," he said, making the demon sigh.

"It's late, and you have finished your assignment," Hannibal whispered. "Stay the night," the demon leaned closer, not truly physically touching him. But it made no difference to Will, the demon's gaze was so heavy on him the demon could very well have been on top of him, dexterously pulling the air from his lungs like a thread only with mouths and tongues.

"Where else could I go?"

The angel left the morning after, headed to nowhere in particular, disguised as a human.

But before leaving, he may have made one, not entirely pure and good, deed.

If thousands of years later, or maybe tomorrow, Hannibal asked him why people thought the pagan god Baal liked farts and other disgusting, related things as an offering, Will would deny that he had anything to do with spreading such rumour.

[Golgotha; 33 a.D]

"Where are your antlers?" The angel asked. He hadn't turned his face to the demon, but Hannibal could feel the eyes burying their ceaseless gaze into his form.

"I could ask you the same about your other three faces. Where are the lion, the eagle and the ox?"

The angel chuckled, finally turning the human face to him. "Humans aren't really kind with what they don't understand. I suppose it's the same with you?"

Hannibal elegantly bowed his own face without antlers, the barest turn upwards of his lips the only thing that betrayed his amusement.

"What did he say that got everyone so angry with him?" Hannibal asked instead of answering, standing just at the right of the angel. Mere feet away from them, the cross held the Son of God and God Themselves, bleeding and pained, but forgiving.

The angel sighed, and Hannibal could feel the fire of rightful fury burning where the cherub stood. He wondered if the earth under him would always show the scorched marks of the angel's feet, or those would disappear with the years.

"Be kind to each other," the angel spat with poorly hidden fury.

"Ah yes," the demon responded with humor in his voice, "that would do."

The day gave space to the night, and then to the dawn, and then, to the last breath of Christ.

Hannibal decided to leave when the Son of God ascended to Heaven.

But before he left, Hannibal took one last look to the impassive face of the angel, stone cold yet with eyes furious like lighting. "I must say, you have chosen wisely Will."

The angel huffled, as he always did when the demon referred to him with a name he had invented.

"I prefer this one to your other faces," and when the angel curled a brow in his direction, he added, "beauty suits you well."

[Egypt; 42 a.D]

Human fire wasn't as hot as Hellfire, but it was a nuisance, and it was still hot, and it could cost him his body.

He would rather like to not get discorporated. Bureaucracy was the worst of inventions and Hell adored it. If Hannibal got himself burned it would take him at least a century to have a human-like body to walk the Earth again.

Hannibal rushed inside, the feathers of his wings barely keeping him safe from the flames of Alexandria.

It was a disaster. Humans were always surprising creatures, but if Hannibal had learned something, it was that their capacity for destruction was equal to God Almighty's.

Hannibal barely managed to get out of the Library as it collapsed, holding as many scrolls as he could. Every one of his limbs ached and he was sure he had lost more feathers in the fire than in four thousand years living on Earth.

People were screaming, the smoke burned the lungs he didn't know he had working inside his body. Dizzy, tired and in pain, Hannibal closed his eyes.

[Egypt; 42 a.D. Part II]

Hannibal woke up in a bed, one that wasn't his, in a house that wasn't his either. There was a crackling fire away from him that illuminated the room in warm orange tones. At his right, and far away from the fire, there were all the scrolls he managed to save from the fire of Alexandria, at his left, there was an angel.

"Good Lord, you're finally awake, your mouths had been trying to bite me for hours. Can you get them still? I'm trying to heal your burns."

[Egypt; 42 a.D. Part III]

Hannibal sighed, finishing a bowl of tasteless soup.

"Thank you," he said at least, after hours of silence.

"I was told to not intervene," the angel said. "I thought your lot wouldn't either."

"I was told not to intervene, too," on the other side of the room, sitting on the floor, the cherub tilted his head, silently asking him to elaborate. "I just… Thousands of years worth of knowledge, history, culture, gone in a night. Humans' well-being doesn't interest me as much as it interests you, but this destruction... I couldn't just stay still and *watch."*

Hannibal expected for the angel to laugh, or to pity him, instead what he got was:

"Would you be comfortable if I groomed your wings, Hannibal? You look like you could use it."

Hannibal shook his wings defensively and the movement set all his nerves aflame with pain. He looked at them, red feathers burned black, spaces of raw skin where feathers had fallen off. They were miserable to look at, but the angel's words were tender, soft as a caress, and most important, sincere.

"Thank you."

[Egypt, 42 a.D. Part IV]

"There you are. Feeling better?" the angel asked the demon who was laying on the bed, content and lax as a cat under the sun.

"Much better," Hannibal said. "If you don't mind me asking, when was the last time you groomed yours?"

The cherub blushed pink in the cheeks from only imagining the mess of feathers his wings would be.

"Eden, I think?"

Hannibal smiled, extending his hand.

"Would you be comfortable in allowing me to return the favor?"

Both pairs of wings popped out from the ethereal plane to the mortal one in a burst of white and golden feathers, without waiting for the angel's confirmation.

[Unknown;]

"Which is your name, kind stranger?" The blind man asked, after he had eaten the fish that, unknown to him, an angel had given him.

The river that had died years ago suddenly had come to life, and the pain and hunger of the village had receded like a miracle. Flowers bloomed in white, pink, purple and red, where the angel had stepped.

"Will."

[Portugal; 1349]

Pestilence. Death. Everywhere Will's watchful gaze reached there was only death and suffering.

The angel burned hundreds of bodies that collapsed in the street every single day, just to keep the others safe.

It was not enough.

Will fed the hungry; healed the sick.

It was *never* enough.

'Don't intervene.' Heaven ordered.

"A doctor! Please!" To Hell with *don't intervene.* "Please!" Will shouted, holding a man in his arms, entering a poor, collapsing infirmary.

"Put him here," a doctor said, bringing a free bed like a miracle. Both of them laid the sick man there as the doctor started to open the man's shirt.

"You need to rest, Will," the doctor said without moving his face at him, and Will could recognize that voice anywhere.

"Hannibal, is that you under there?" The angel asked, trying to find dark eyes under the plague doctor's mask.

"I am," Hannibal answered, covered from head to toe in black robes and a crow's mask. The demon brought a bowl with herbs and covered the sick man's chest with it before turning his gaze towards the angel again.

"I know you won't want to, but listen: go home and try to rest," Hannibal told him, voice soft and worried. Will couldn't be sure from which of the demon's mouths it came. "You look worse than Hell. Believe me, I've been through it."

The angel shook his head instead; dark bags under blue eyes, pink skin tinted pale grey.

"How can I help?" Will asked instead.

"Without miracles?" The angel nodded. *Don't intervene.* "Dress yourself with a mask and follow me."

[Italy; 1469]

Hannibal was a glutton for every pleasure that existed. That could vary, from foods to music, to drinks to art. But the thing he liked best was beauty, in any form it could take.

For that it was that he frequented artists and kings equally through his eternal life.

Life on Earth showered him with pleasures more luxurious than Heaven and Hell could dream of.

That being said, it was a shame that he hadn't seen beauty incarnate for what has been a full century, without a clue of where and when he could find the angel again.

So, if he made artists dream with a face of chocolate curls and eyes as blue and fierce as a tempest, in hopes that someone would be talented enough to pay him justice; in hopes to look at that face again every time he ached… well, who could blame him.

[Spain; 1552 // Heaven; Unknown]

Heaven was awful. Empty. Cold.

"Don't intervene."

Cruel.

"Jack, *please*," Will begged. He was tired. He was angry. He was *desperate*. "I'm the protector of Earth. Why would She put me there if you're not going to let me protect them?!"

Why couldn't the Archangels *understand?*

"They're killing each other, Jack, please. Let me interviene."

Will could hear the screams. He could feel the pain. Hear them cry. Smell the corpses burn, hear the blood drip.

"The ineffable plan–"

All in the name of God.

"It doesn't make sense!"

"WILL!" The Archangel shouted. "It's not our job to make sense of Her plan. Just to obey. And your order is: Don't. Intervene."

"She said *'love each other and be kind'*" Will tried again between clenched teeth, pressing his fists until his knuckles went as white as Jack's wings. "People are dying."

"That's what humans do, Will. They make mistakes, they die. It's God's plan." Jack sighed. "Go back to Earth. And stay away. Don't intervene."

[Spain; 1552. Part II]

A flash of light and Will was on Earth again.

"Rough day at work?" Hannibal asked, comfortably sitting in Will's house. Dressed in his old Black Plague Doctor's robes; mask and all.

Confused, tired and weak, Will didn't care about how Hannibal entered, nor why he was cooking for an army in his kitchen, nor how the picture could look so natural. Will supposed that the seven women accused of witchcraft hiding in the first floor were the reason for the food at least.

Still, the very first coherent thought of Will was "Why are you dressed like that?"

In any other moment, Hannibal would have found Will's confusion adorable. But not today.

Hannibal left the table, walking slowly to the angel. He always walked with refined elegance, like a king would walk across his kingdom. Will liked to watch Hannibal walk; he liked to watch him cook, moving like a dancer. He liked to watch Hannibal.

"For this," the demon said, pulling Will towards him and into a hug.

Will stood frozen for a minute, two, then the reality struck him. The tortures, the pain, the screams. The angel sobbed, hugging Hannibal back. Tears flowed freely and hot, the robes from the plague keeping the demon safe from them. Bells rangs outside, covering the cherub's cries. Four faces glitched with light and Hannibal covered Will's body with his wings, keeping the city safe from the angel's fire.

Will cried on Hannibal's chest for hours, for every year that passed and for every year that was to come. All the time, Hannibal kept him close, gently caressing between the angel's wings, whispering *"I promise it will end,"* from all his mouths.

[London, The Globe Theater; 1601]

"Remind me again how you convinced me to come here with you?" Hannibal frowned. The wrinkles in his nose reminded Will of a cat and he had to make a conscious effort to not laugh at it.

"I didn't do anything, Hannibal," he said, looking towards the demon instead of the stage. "I just told you *'I'm going to watch Shakespeare's new play. Have you seen it?'* You were the one who entered on a rant about how Shakespeare's tragedies are better than his comedies and followed me here. I don't even remember inviting you to tag along."

Will had to make another conscious effort to tame the grin blooming in his face at Hannibal's clear annoyance.

"And I couldn't be more right. His tragedies are far better than…" in the stage, someone made a dick-joke and the audience exploded with laughter.

"This," the demon added with disgust.

"Well, I enjoy his comedies," Will said, stealing a grape from Hannibal's hand, "I prefer them over his gloomy works. The comedies make me laugh."

"A shame that you can't enjoy the ache of star crossed lovers, destined to be able to hold each other in arms only in the sight of death... and prefer jokes about penises and farts," Hannibal sighed *so* dramatically, and Will snorted so loudly someone throw him a handful of grapes' seeds at the back of his head.

"I still miss the Greeks," Hannibal said, as if the Greeks hadn't had plays full of jokes about dicks and farts. And if someone behind them fell to the floor because the seat where he was sitting broke, well, the angel didn't comment on it.

Will frunced his nose, a habit that he didn't have before he had started spending time with the demon.

"I don't miss the Greeks."

Hannibal's face didn't show his amusement, but one of the mouths under his clothes laughed.

"Of course you don't, Cupid."

Will groaned, rolling his eyes.

"I will never live that down, won't I?"

[London, The Globe Theater; 1601. Part II]

"Thank you, Sir," Will said, holding tight to his chest the signed manuscript.

"It's always nice to meet a fan," William Shakespeare answered with a smile. "I'm glad to hear that you enjoyed Romeo and Juliet so much."

"My friend loves it. He's leaving England and won't be able to watch it again. I'm truly grateful for this."

If Will made a tiny, *tiny* little miracle to make sure Shakespeare agreed to give him a copy, and another tiny, *tiny* little miracle to make Romeo and Juliet famous enough that Hannibal could watch it in theaters even after Shakespeare's death… Well, nobody needed to know. Especially Hannibal.

[Paris; 1793]

It was a blessing that the shouting of the revolution outside was loud enough to cover Will's laugh.

"Have you finished gloating?" Hannibal groaned, sitting on a tiny stool in the middle of a cell in the Bastille, hands locked with handcuffs. One look at his clothes would tell you exactly why he was thrown in jail.

"Oh no, I haven't even *begun,"* Will laughed again, his whole face pink from the root of his hair to the tip of his nose; his eyes glistening with blissful tears. "You decided to pop in the middle of a revolution dressed like this? I thought you were smarter than that."

Will shook his head at Hannibal's offended huff.

"I could hardly step on Versalles dressed like you, Will."

"What in God's name were you doing in Versalles anyway? Is all this your doing?" Will gestured to the cell's window from where it entered the slightest rays of sunlight and the roaring shouts of the crowd.

"Hardly m doing. Humans don't need my help to kill each other with such clever methods," Hannibal said, nose up in the air as if he was trying to disimulate he wasn't smelling rotten fruits. "No, I was visiting Marie Antoinette, I knew it was a matter of time before she was decapitated, and I would never forgive myself if I didn't ask her for the recipe of her brioche."

While Will had his jaw open ajar, the sound of the guillotine echoed inside the cell.

"Did you hear that? That's going to be you because you're such a fucking idiot."

"Language, Will, please. Your time in America has made you foul-mouthed and it doesn't suit you."

"You know what doesn't suit you, Hannibal? Having no head."

For a man in his position, Hannibal held his head high, and if Will had been a lesser man, or a lesser angel, or even so, a cherub like him, he would have recoiled from the dangerous glare the demon sent him. But he was not only a powerful cherub, but a cherub that had dealt with Hannibal's dramatic ass for 5793 years and counting.

So, Will grinned.

"You can't get out, can you?"

The smell of sulfur was acidic and sharp, and Will had to step on a piece of paper close to him when it started to light up on fire.

Hannibal cleared his throat before speaking, it was always amazing how controlled he was. It was also hilarious to watch him lose that control.

"I should be in Japan right now. Making a demonic miracle in France to escape would be rather difficult to explain."

Will leaned to the wall, crossing his arms. An incredible amount of will power was the only thing that stopped him from bursting into laughter again.

"It sounds like you could use some help."

But there was no amount of will power on Earth that could stop him from chuckling when smoke came out from Hannibal's nose in a loud, tired sigh.

"Yes, your help would be very much appreciated."

Will hummed with playful mischief, scrutinizing the demon, as if the decision wasn't already made.

"Say please."

Hannibal didn't roll his eyes, nor did he groan; because he was above such rude expressions. But Will heard how a man walking down the corridor next to the cell tripped on his own feet. Someone outside probably fell on horses' shit.

"Please, Will. Would you be so kind?" Hannibal asked, lifting his cuffed hands.

A snap of fingers, and the handcuffs fell on the floor. Another, and Hannibal was dressed in the most common clothes. Another, and an angel and a demon were outside the Bastille.

"Allow me to invite you for a drink as a thank you?" Hannibal asked, offering his arm for Will to take.

Will eyed him for a moment, then shrugged and took it.

"I'm never going to let you forget this."

[Wales; 1805]

"Time to pay; The Ark."

Will had set the letter on fire after finished reading it, as he set on fire every other of Hannibal's letters during their lives.

The angel closed his shop, a humble cabin close to the sea that sold fishing rods and boats, and left for their usual place of meeting.

With a knot in his stomach, Will headed to the coffee shop that Hannibal was fond of. The whole way the knot did nothing but tighten itself with every step. If Hannibal was asking for a favor after so long; if Hannibal was going to use this card instead of still having it under his sleeve; it was important. And dangerous.

And he must be desperate.

Peacefully drinking a cup of coffee under the grey morning there he was. Looking as calm as usual.

That was, until Will crossed the threshold of power that Hannibal always surrounded himself with for protection.

The raw, sharp smell of spoiled flesh and blood travel directly to his senses. It wasn't Hannibal's normal scent; it was Hannibal's scent when he was nervous. Will had only scented three times during their lives. He would never forget it.

Every time he scented it, Will wished it was the last.

"I need something," Hannibal said at least, after a minute of silence with Will seated in front of him.

The people around them didn't seem to pay any attention to them, neither the waitress that left a mug of steaming black coffee in front of Will without looking at him or had directed a word to him before.

"I supposed as much," Will answered, taking a sip of the coffee. Completely black, only one and a half spoons of sugar as he liked. Hannibal always knew his preferences. Under the cup, there was a piece of folded paper.

"Read it and destroy it," Hannibal said without moving his lips. "One never knows who can be listening," said Hannibal's voice as he drank from his own cup.

Holy water. It read.

"No." Will hissed, as the paper burned.

"You owe me," echoed Hannibal's voice and the smell of rotten meat intensified, even as his face betrayed nothing of what he was feeling. A mask of polite calm carefully stitched and perfectioned by time. "You have no choice."

"I won't give you a suicide pill, Hannibal."

Hannibal sighed deeply, putting his own cup down, and now speaking with the mouth of his face.

"I treasure life far too much to destroy myself," he said, placing his hand across the table with his palm up, inviting. The mouth on the palm was closed, but Will knew what kind of fangs were hidden under the skin. Still, his hesitation wasn't because he feared being bitten.

"I made sure nobody's looking," the demon added in a soft whisper. Will had known him for five thousand years, and knew the meaning behind every subtle change in the demon's demeanor.

Fear.

Need.

Will sidled his own hand on top of the demon's, holding it gently; caressing the warm skin with his thumb.

"Mammon came by surprise a week ago, one day after you left my house. She seemed to get a hold of your scent–"

"Are you hurt?" Will interrupted him. If his worry wasn't clear in his voice, the way he tightened his hold on Hannibal's hand betrayed him. By how Hannibal's gaze softened from bright red to a calm brown, like whiskey and honey showered by sunlight, will supposed it didn't go unnoticed.

"I told her I was tempting a priest, blamed the *righteous* scent onto him," the demon explained, placing his other hand on top of Will's. The lips of his palms kissed softly the angel's skin, placating the fear that started to simmer inside him. "She seemed to believe me. But I can never be truly sure. I've been debating with myself for days if I should tell you. I didn't want to ask, didn't want to worry you."

Hannibal sighed again, both of them tightening their hold in the other's hands.

"Will, if anything goes wrong, I need insurance."

Will stayed silent for long seconds. A minute. Two. Then, he breathed a long sigh.

"Let me think about it, please."

Hannibal nodded, releasing the angel's hand. "Of course."

In front of Hannibal there was only an empty chair and a black coffee growing cold.

Well, not an entirely empty chair.

A long, thin, white feather rested on it, until Hannibal pocketed it inside his suit's breast pocket.

[Wales, eleven days after]

The barrier around Hannibal's house protected it from the ears and eyes of strangers, humans or not. But the main door opened obediently as Will stepped into the entrance.

"I'm in the kitchen," Hannibal's voice echoed from the hallway. "Will you stay for dinner?"

Will didn't respond, he walked across the dark house that always smelled of food and warmth. He crossed the living room filled with books, the labyrinthic hallways that he had memorized; the house getting warmer and hotter with every new step.

The walls seemed to salivate, for good measure Will never touched them. The floor seemed to breathe, moving in a dark cherry tone of wood. Will always walked slowly by the hallways, careful to not trip with his own feet.

"Will?" Hannibal asked from the heart of the house.

Will didn't respond, he just walked inside the kitchen holding a thermos tight to his chest; the flesh of his cheeks was a raw pink, his eyes were still a rabid red.

"Not today," Will said, his voice rough and hoarse. "I would like to leave."

Hannibal's voice was softer than a whisper, and Will couldn't gather correctly from where it came.

"Is that…?"

Will's voice was hoarse and broken, but still sharp when he spoke.

"Yes."

Silence stretched as Hannibal and Will stood in front of the other inside Hannibal's kitchen. Hannibal, with all his preservation skills, didn't try to reach the cherub. Will, against his wishes, pulled the electric blue handkerchief that Hannibal had given him as a gift one century ago, *'It reminded me of your eyes';* he placed the handkerchief over the counter, and gently on top of it, the thermos filled with Holy Water.

Another tear tried to escape from Will's eyes, and he made sure to dry it before it could do irreparable damage to Hannibal's kitchen.

"Take my tears, but give me something in exchange," Will demanded, his voice almost broken, held together only by the sheer force of his own determination and will.

"Anything, Will."

"Insurance for myself."

Hannibal nodded.

"Give me a couple of days."

Will's footsteps echoed across the house even after he left; and Hannibal stood in his kitchen, alone, regarding from afar a thermos of angel tears and a handkerchief that said *'think about my eyes'.*

[Wales; a couple of days later.]

Will's barriers were not necessarily stronger, but he was less sociable than Hannibal. Hannibal invited people to his house, he liked for humans to watch it from afar. His house could be found.

Will's house, on the other hand… that was a tricky one if you didn't know where to look and what to look for.

Will also had a system of alarm that didn't need his powers.

"Hello everybody," Hannibal greeted the horde of wagging tails and happy barking, patting the excited dogs that had associated him with treats and bites of sausages.

"And hello to you too, Will," a moment after Will was there, as if he had just manifested from thin air. "Your insurance. As requested."

Hannibal held a box towards the angel, obsidian black with a red pattern all across it, beaming like lava.

"What's inside?"

Hannibal held up his palm. The smile that greeted Will had one of its long fangs missing, and it whispered, "a dagger."

[Paris, France; on top of the recently build Eiffel Tower; 1889]

"How is our dear friend, Archangel Jack? He still thinks I truly am a deer?" Hannibal asked, passing Will a flute of champagne.

The soft light of the street adorned the angel's face. Truly, the humans were such inventive little creatures. As much as they destroyed, they brought beauty to what had been once a deserted land.

"Giving me a migraine as usual," Will said, drinking the flute in one go. Hannibal refilled it automatically.

"I already told you, our respective head offices don't care about how a job is done as long as it's done," Hannibal said from one the mouths in his chest, drinking his own flute. He frowned. "You should stop worrying yourself so much and let me take some of your assignments. It has taken a toll on you."

The angel shook his head, leaning back and, resting his weight over his elbows, he looked at the demon.

"Do you even do *your* job? When I look at you, you're always among the elite in someone's party."

Hannibal made an offended huff, and just like that, Will was smiling again. For as long as work on Earth left him tired at the end of the week, month or year, he always had the blissful moment in which he could annoy Hannibal.

"Of course I do my job, Will, please."

"Sure."

Living among mortals had its ups and downs. Will knew humans amused Hannibal, and Will knew he adored dogs. There were all kinds of things to experiment with, and not even an eternal life had enough time to do every single one. Hannibal always showed him new foods, new drinks, new works of art. Sometimes Will wondered if he would have loved Earth so much if Hannibal wasn't there with him.

There was another thing about humans. Will, as much as antisocial as he was, he had friends during his life. But humans were so fragile; so ephemeral. So human.

In the end, humans died and civilizations collapsed in a blink.

But in the end, in the very end, Hannibal was there.

"Jack's in love," Will said. The moon was there in the sky too, he supposed. Hannibal, the sun and the moon. He could always count on them at the end of the day. Maybe not the sun. The sun would die eventually like every other star. Hannibal and the moon then.

"How beautiful," Hannibal responded, surprised yet sincere. "Good for him."

"With a human woman."

A pause. Then silence. Then, "Oh, dear."

"Yep," Will muttered.

The night stretched long, with the company of each other and the echo of humanity below them. Humans die. Stars explode. Empires fall. And one day War will come and everything will be gone. Dust to dust.

"How awful it must be," Hannibal whispered, looking down to the light of the streets and the cars; the tiny, ephemeral people walking hand in hand. "To be in love with the very thing you know you shouldn't, and that you will never be able to possess."

"Thought you liked those kinds of dramas," Will said, tearing his gaze from the world to look at the demon at his side. "Wasn't Romeo and Juliet your favorite?"

For a second, Hannibal's lips turned upwards. The smallest of smiles wrinkled the corners of his eyes, then it disappeared.

"I think that 'Romeo and Juliet' is beautiful," he whispered, turning to look at Will. Their bodies were inches away, their hands a fingertip of distance from each other, and while the movement gathered them closer, they did not touch.

"Still," Hannibal said after a moment, finally tearing his eyes from the cherub and back to the crowd. "They're a tragedy, a pain I wouldn't wish for anyone to experience."

Will turned his face from Hannibal to the crowd under them, but the ceaseless gaze of thousands of blue eyes never truly left the demon.

"Me neither."

[Colombia; 1934]

It never occurred Will to look inside the black box that Hannibal gave him.

One could think of it as naivety; one could think of it as trust. Heaven would have told him to never trust a demon, that inside that box there could a trap.

Heaven would have told him to smite the demon as soon as Will saw him.

Will could have told them that a Cherub had no opportunity against one of the Seven Princes of Hell.

Heaven would have told him that they could send reinforcements.

Maybe Will was naive, too caring for an angel, too kind.

The box was hidden in the kitchen – of course it was hidden somewhere in the kitchen – Will never used the kitchen, angels didn't need to eat. When Jack visited him on Earth, he never entered the kitchen.

The box was hidden inside the oven, because it would be the last place where someone would look, and because Will supposed Hannibal would have find it amusing. For as cold as the obsidian box felt to the fingers, it shone with cherry read and bright oranges from the thin threads of lava that decorated it.

Will took it to bed; he never used the bed to sleep, angels didn't need to sleep. But he liked to rest there, sit with the dogs in front of the fire. Few people have entered the house, fewer commented in the unusual placing of it, just in the middle of the living room. Will's answer was always the same: I like to sleep with the dogs.

Hannibal never seemed to mind. He visited the majority of Will's houses during their lives and never made a comment about it.

But the box.

Will sat on the bed with the box in front of him; the dogs were sleeping in the floor, snoring softly, their breathing accompanying the howl of the wind outside.

Inside the box was a dagger made of white bone, turning the light around it in red and orange hues. It wasn't the biggest dagger known to man – or angel. It was as small as a cooking knife. The handle was obsidian black, made of the same material as the box. Will didn't touch the carved bone of the blade; bright, bleach white bone turning sick yellow towards the end until it turned the same decaying rot black of a tooth cavity.

The blade was slightly curved like a serpents fang; Will wasn't as stupid as to touch it to prove how sharp its blade was. But he took the dagger from the red cushion of the box, and placed it gently over the bed. He caressed the handle with the same worshipful touch he would caress any other part of Hannibal, fingers, face–; Will laid there, contemplating the dagger all night, until sun came, and he hid it again inside the box and the oven until he needed it.

[Munich, Germany; 1979]

"You can get away with 'old money' and being a count forever, Hannibal," Will had said somewhere around 1907. "Eventually, you'll need to get a job."

It seemed that the time had come.

After a very unfortunate situation in Russia during 1917, and Will never letting the demon forget about the french revolution, Hannibal was studying for his degree.

"I can't believe you're really studying, I thought you were going to just miracle your diploma," Will said, resting on the sofa of Hannibal's living room. Across from him, sitting at the desk and drowning in papers, was a demon with reading glasses. "Or maybe look for a job that didn't need one."

"If I'm going to work, Will, I'm going to do it right," he said without lifting his gaze from the books in front of him. "And psychology is rather interesting."

Will hummed from the sofa, clearly not believing him. Hannibal sighed. "Well, if it wasn't exactly for…" he gestured to the papers at his left.

"Ah yes," the cherub said, not hiding the mischief and amusement in his voice. "Remind me again Hannibal, please, who introduced those ideas to Dr. Freud."

Hannibal sighed, throwing his glasses on the desk. "How could I have known that his theory would become so popular?"

Will grinned, holding his glass of whiskey high in the air in the gesture of a toast.

"To the devil its due."

[Florence, Italy; 1987]

'Come to Florence. –W.'

The letter had appeared in Hannibal's kitchen. One moment his countertop was clean, the other it had a letter.

Three words, and Hannibal left Ireland for Italy in a second. Will's letters weren't always so straight to the point. There were thousands of them, and he treasured all the same. The originals were burned, always. The copies were hidden.

There was one that Hannibal had memorized, one that its corners were damaged and the paper had seen better days. It was the only one that Hannibal never dared to burn, no matter how dangerous it was to keep it.

'I haven't heard from you in 80 years. I know it is not a lot, and yet. Last week I was walking down by the city and the air had the smell of coffee and the most obscene brioche I smelled in all eternity. It made me think of you. I thought about you and what you would say. Would you have invited me for a drink and tell me Antoinette's brioche was better? Or tell me about another brioche that you thought was better? Probably you can bake a better brioche.

Or maybe it could have been a good brioche, and I would have to hear you talk about it for the next nine centuries.

I don't know if you're still living in South America, or if you moved to somewhere else. I have faith that this letter will get to you nonetheless, no matter how many barriers you have surrounded your stronghold with. They always seem to. You said your kitchen is always open to friends, and I hold you to that.

I'm thinking about you. About how I haven't heard from you. How I don't know when our paths will meet again. How I would like to see you again, preferably sooner than later. Preferably soon.

I'm thinking about you, wondering. I wonder. Would you come if I asked you to?

I'm in Verona right now. I'll be in Verona for the next couple of years. An assignment with a priest that needs guidance. If you were here you could try to tempt him. Give me something interesting to do. These last 80 years have bored me.

Humans. You always talk about how interesting they are. Juliet never existed, yet still, they named one of Verona's balconies as hers. Today I passed by Juliet's balcony and thought of you. Women started a tradition about leaving letters on her balcony, I'll leave this one there. Hopefully, Juliet will give me her blessing, and this letter will reach you.

– W.

Hannibal was in South America in 1810 one moment, and the other in Verona. Humans never needed him after all.

And just like that one time in 1810, he traveled from Ireland to Florence in a deja vu, looking for a house close to the river, with enough space to have dogs. Leave it to Will to never settle in one place, and always telling him cities instead of an address. Leave it to the cherubs to be so ambiguous.

"Well, that was fast," said a voice as melodious as a harp, but as dangerous and sharp as a sword behind the demon's back. "You didn't even last ten minutes."

"Hello to you too, Will," Hannibal chuckled, turning around to be received by beauty incarnated. "May I ask why you requested my presence?"

The victorious grin in the angel's face did nothing to hide the content, soft look in his eyes.

"Follow me, I want to show you something."

Hannibal adored Italy during the Renaissance. He was a glutton, but gluttony doesn't only cover the foods and the drinks. Art, in all its forms, was what Hannibal could never have enough of. There were artists, masters of the arts that history would never forget about. But Hannibal always had a soft spot for Botticelli.

"I was in Switzerland a week ago. And I overheard about this exhibition. They seemed to have recovered a lot of his works and put them together, open to the public," Will told him, walking faster than usual through the halls of the museum. "I came yesterday to make sure it was here."

The next room was empty, even as the museum was not. When Hannibal crossed the open arch and bells began to echo in a plane that humans could not hear, he realized why. The smell of rivers and nature and spring, the very smell of Will covered the room. A barrier protecting the painting.

"As soon as I saw it I knew I had to bring you to it."

It had been a lot of years since Hannibal had seen The Primavera in person.

"Do you want me to wait for you outside?" Will asked from a prudent distance. It took a moment for Hannibal to understand the question, then the demon shook his head.

"Would you sit with me?" One of Hannibal's mouths asked, Will wasn't sure which, Hannibal neither.

"Of course."

Their fingers brushed; they didn't know who was the one who closed the space between them and held the other's hand, but in the end, it didn't matter.

[Florence; 1987. Part II]

They walked through the museum's exhibition until it closed. And even so, in the night, humans didn't bother to tell them to go.

Hannibal was ready to offer Will to take him to dinner; he was ready to grab his hands and thank him for this moment. But Will had disappeared in one room and Hannibal couldn't seem to find him.

Until…

"SAINT SEBASTIAN NEVER LOOKED LIKE THIS!"

Will appeared out of nowhere blushing red in the face and holding a painting.

"HANNIBAL, WHY DOES EVERY DEPICTION OF SAINT SEBASTIAN LOOKS LIKE ME?"

[Somewhere in the history of mankind]

Hannibal was always delighted by humans' creativity, was it they used for pleasure or for destruction. Will never truly cared. He was put on Earth to protect them, and nothing more.

Humans always told stories about monsters; tentacles, fire, powers, darkness… they had come up with the more diverse kind of imaginary monsters they could create just to ignore the fact that they were worse.

Heaven always told him to stay away, to not interfere with the worst ones; and Will always wanted to disobey. Why would have been put on Earth to protect, if they weren't going to let him do what he was designed to do?

Monsters, in all kinds, walked among the humans. And Will couldn't use his sword, but he had a dagger.

Heaven always told him to not interfere with the worst kind of monsters.

Heaven never said anything about the ones that walked hidden in the light.

"I need your help," Will said. His voice didn't tremble but the tempest in his eyes roared. The faintest taste of blood reached every one of Hannibal's mouths, every inch of his skin itched.

He wanted to grab the angel's hands and lick them clean.

"Lead the way, Will."

[Somewhere in the history of mankind. Part II]

"It’s not truly cannibalism if you think about it," Hannibal never lied, maybe he could step over the line of deception and dance around the truth. But he never lied. "We live among mortals but we are not humans."

Hannibal waited, his gaze heavy over Will across the table; watching him take the very first piece of monster's flesh to his lips. Blood colored eyes danced like a physical caress over the angel, drinking from his beauty.

"I enjoyed killing him," Will confessed and bit into the flesh. His voice came with confidence, without the fear of being heard. He waited a moment after swallowing. His halo didn't melt, his wings didn't burn. He didn't fall. He smiled. "Delicious as always."

Hannibal smiled, pleased, content. Happy. He placed his palm up on the table, his mouth closed.

From across the table Will returned the gesture, holding the demon's hand.

[Somewhere in the history of mankind. Part III]

"I brought something, for dessert," Will said, and before Hannibal could say something as *'you didn't have to',* the cherub raised his hand. He held a golden fruit from a tree that didn't exist anymore. "Eat it with me?"

How could Hannibal say no?

Six pieces of forbidden fruit were presented, three for the cherub and three for the demon.

"Would you be so kind, Will," Hannibal said, sitting so close to him, table manners forgotten. Hannibal's eyes moved from the fruit at the table to Will's lips, then to his eyes. "Would you allow me?"

The angel stretched his throat, tilting his face towards the demon. Will's gaze buried into Hannibal's form, feeding more from the burning amalgam of feelings than from the flesh and from the fruit.

Will didn't say a word, but he parted his lips obediently as Hannibal's fingers pressed a piece of fruit gently over his tongue.

[One day before the End of The World]

"The Antichrist is here, on Earth."

If Hannibal's doors opened to Will obediently, there was no way of denying Will's dogs didn't let him enter in the same way.

"We knew it wouldn't last forever," Will answered when Hannibal stepped inside. When you share every single day of your lives, do you keep saying *'hi'?*

Will supposed that when you know you only have a handful more hours to live, every second counts.

"6000 years is a lot, don't you think?" Will said, offering Hannibal a glass of that one wine that had been waiting for this day. It obviously was the end of the world because Hannibal rejected it.

"Will."

"I enjoyed it," Will said, forgetting the wine over a table and pulling Hannibal close to him. "Every second of my time with you."

"It doesn't have to end," one of Hannibal's mouths spoke, like every time he was desperate or scared or too happy to control them. Will chuckled, and the mouths on Hannibal's hands whispered sweet nonsense in every language known to man as they caressed his face.

"How so?" Will smiled, letting the palms caress his cheeks.

"We could run away now, together." Hannibal whispered. If Will didn't know him, he would have sworn Hannibal was begging. Hannibal tried to move his lips but his voice broke.

"Tomorrow everything will be ashes," said the mouth caressing Will's left cheek. The one at his right continued, "we don't need to be part of it. Let them tear each other to pieces."

Another mouth echoed, "run away with me. *Please."*

Will put his hands over Hannibal's chest, close to where the last one had spoken.

"They'll chase us," but it wasn't said with fear; just a fact of what was coming. Will didn't move away, he held tighter to Hannibal's chest, his fingers tracing where he knew the most dangerous mouth was.

"They won't be able to contain us," Hannibal smelled like spoiled meat when he was afraid. He smelled like blood and lighting right now, pulling Will closer, holding by the back of his head, threading his finger between dark curls, not wanting to let him go. "When the time comes, I will kill God to keep you by my side."

Will pulled him closer, tasting the lighting and the blood, the core of the universe in the demon's lips.

It tasted better than the forbidden fruit.

"Let's go."

End Notes

The NSFW version of the Babylon scene can be found here or clicking *next work on this series*. Thanks for reading.

If you're interested in more Hannigram (+others) content or reading my original work, check my link three and take a look at my coffee where I always upload extra content for free! ☕
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Thank you for reading. Lots of love, Angel ♡

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